

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): An alloy endowed with high-temperature mechanical strength in an oxidizing medium, said alloy being free of molybdenum and/or tungsten and comprising a chromium-containing matrix strengthened by precipitation of carbides, characterized in that it wherein said alloy comprises carbides of at least one metal (M) chosen from selected from the group consisting of titanium, zirconium and hafnium, said carbides optionally further containing comprising tantalum (M').

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The alloy as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that it which comprises a matrix based on cobalt or nickel or iron-nickel.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): The alloy as claimed in claim 1 or 2, characterized in that it , which comprises at least 0.2%, especially at least 0.6%, carbon by weight.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The alloy as claimed in one of the preceding claims, characterized in that it claim 1, which comprises the metal M, and optionally M', in a metal/carbon molar ratio (M + M')/C of around 0.9 to 2, in particular 0.9 to 1.5.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The alloy as claimed in one of the preceding claims, characterized in that it claim 1, which is consists essentially composed of the following elements (the proportions being indicated in percentages by weight of the alloy):

|                  |            |
|------------------|------------|
| Cr               | 23 to 34%; |
| Ni               | 6 to 12%;  |
| M = Zr, Hf or Ti | 0.2 to 7%; |

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Preliminary Amendment

|         |                 |
|---------|-----------------|
| M' = Ta | 0 to 7%;        |
| C       | 0.2 to 1.2%;    |
| Fe      | less than 3%;   |
| Si      | less than 1%;   |
| Mn      | less than 0.5%, |

the balance consisting of cobalt and inevitable impurities.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): The alloy as claimed in ~~one of the preceding claims, characterized in that it claim 1, which comprises 0.2 to 5%, preferably around 0.4 to 5%, titanium by weight.~~

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): The alloy as claimed in ~~one of the preceding claims, characterized in that it claim 1, which comprises 0.2 to 5%, preferably around 0.4 to 3%, zirconium by weight.~~

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): The alloy as claimed in ~~one of the preceding claims, characterized in that it claim 1, which comprises 0.2 to 7%, preferably around 0.4 to 5%, hafnium by weight.~~

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): The alloy as claimed in claim 8, ~~characterized in that wherein the Hf/C ratio is less than 1.~~

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): The alloy as claimed in ~~one of the preceding claims, characterized in that claim 1, wherein the tantalum content is around about 1 to 7%, in particular around 2 to 6%.~~

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): An article, ~~especially an article that can be used in particular for the hot smelting or conversion of glass, made of an alloy as claimed in claim 1 any one of claims 1 to 10, especially by casting.~~

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): The article as claimed in claim 11 ~~that, which~~ has undergone a forging operation after the alloy has been cast.

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): The article as claimed in ~~either of claims 11 and 12~~ claim 11, which consists of a fiberizing spinner for the manufacture of mineral wool.

Claim 14 (Currently Amended): A process for manufacturing an article as claimed in ~~claims 11 to 13~~ claim 11, comprising the casting of the molten alloy in a suitable mold.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): A process for manufacturing mineral wool by internal centrifugation, in which a stream of molten mineral material is poured into a fiberizing spinner, the peripheral band of which is pierced by a multitude of orifices via which filaments of molten mineral material escape that are then attenuated through the action of a gas into wool, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the temperature of the mineral material in the spinner is at least 1200°C and ~~in that~~ the fiberizing spinner is made of a cobalt-based alloy as claimed in ~~one of claims 1 to 10~~ claim 1.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): The process as claimed in claim 15, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the molten mineral material has a liquidus temperature of around 1130°C or higher, ~~especially 1170°C or higher~~.